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Vol. 1

*Record Supplement for November, 1938*

No. 11

## BACH

**Bach: Johannes-Passion—No. 67, "Ruht wohl" (Final Chorus).** State Music Academy Chorus (in German) & Berlin Instrumental-Collegium (orchestra) conducted by Fritz Stein. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-12331†, list Price \$1.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.)

Apart from occasionally tremulous sopranos, this is an earnest and expressive performance, and while it is scarcely one that sounds the full poignance of the ineffably moving *St. John Passion* final chorus, it surpasses by a wide margin the only other recording, that conducted by Defauw on French C-D15016—sung in French and dating back a good many years. Victor might do well to re-press also a companion disc by Fritz Stein of the *Schluss-Choral* and *In meines Herzens Grunde* (G-EG6010); the gramphonic representation of this *Passion* is shamefully inadequate.

**Bach: Unacc. Violin Sonata No. 4 in D minor—Chaconne (Arr. Piano Solo by Busoni).** Johana Harris, piano. 4 sides, 2-12" discs, Nos. V-12353/4, in Set VM-506, list price complete with album \$3.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.)

Unhappily there were no recording devices in the days of Robert and Clara Schumann; we may have no Schumanns today, but we are not lacking in highly gifted musical families. The composer-executant couple has been represented on discs before by the Luenings (and probably by others); now we have Johana Harris to demonstrate that Roy Harris is not the only gifted musician in her family. Presumably she will record some of her husband's works (the accompanying leaflet for this album suggests that she will also be heard in contemporary works); meanwhile we have an excellent exposition of her talents in the Bach-Busoni *Chaconne*. Whatever one may think of the transcription's

own merits, there can be no question of the warmth, clarity, and breadth with which it is presented here. Both performance and recording are far superior to those in the only other disc version, the decidedly cold and angular Ernst Victor Wolff set (CM-X91, reviewed in the March 1938 *Record Supplement*).

**Bach: Sonatas (Clavier and Violin), Vol. 1.** Alice Ehlers (harpsichord) & Boris Schwartz (violin). 12 sides, 6-12" discs, Nos. GT-12117/22, in Set GT-7, list price complete with album \$9.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.)

No. 1 in B minor

No. 2 in A major

No. 3 in E major

(4 sides each)

Gamut, which gave us the great Moussorgsky *Sunless* cycle and some other unusual recordings last season, emerges from its hibernation with new vitality and a superb contribution to the gramphonic Bach repertory: a complete set of the Violin and Harpsichord Sonatas, in two volumes, the second of which (Sonatas 4, 5, and 6) will be available next month. None of these has been available before in the original version; of the first three No. 1 has never been recorded, No. 2 has been represented only by isolated movements, and No. 3 only by a 1929 violin-piano version (G-C1632/3) that has been recently withdrawn. The first three, all designed on the same structural lines (slow and quick movements alternating in a four-movement scheme), are generally considered the finest of Bach's work in this form (the B minor Sonata is particularly impressive), and the present performances lose nothing of their incomparable blend of Bachian expressiveness and vivacity. It is good to have Miss Ehlers back on discs again: she was one of the earliest recording harpsichordists and still one of the best; and she has an able collaborator here in Boris Schwartz, a former child prodigy, now a matured virtuoso and member of the N.B.C. Symphony Orchestra.



**Bach: Komm, süßer Tod** (Schemelli Gesangbuch No. 42 & Handel: *L'Allegro, Il Penseroso ed Il Moderato* — Let me wander, not unseen. Marian Anderson (alto, in German) with piano accompaniments by Kosti Vehanen. 2 sides, 10" disc, No. V-1939, list price \$1.50. (Parcel Post to any part of the U. S. A.)

There is little good to be said for the synthetic introduction to the familiar Bach Song, and still less for the inadequate labelling of the Handel air as "Siciliana" only. Even Miss Anderson is not immune to criticism, for while her voice is as darkly enchanting as ever and as richly recorded, her *süßer Tod* might more accurately be titled *O Tod, wie bitter bist du . . . Allegro's* air, sung in German as "*Lass mich wandern das Grün*," is the only available recording, for the English version by Austral (G-D1042) has long been withdrawn.

**Bach: Sutte No. 3 in D — Air.** See odd-side of Mozart: *Symphony No. 33 in B flat major*.

## BEETHOVEN

**Beethoven: Quartet (Strings) No. 10 in E flat major, Op. 74 ("Harp" Quartet).** Budapest String Quartet. 8 sides, 4-12" discs, Nos. V-14997/15000, in Set VM-467†, list price complete with album \$8.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

**Beethoven: Quartet (Strings) No. 12 in E flat major, Op. 127.** Busch String Quartet. 10 sides, 5-12" discs, Nos. V-15092/6, in set VM-489†, list price complete with album \$10.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

**Beethoven: Quartet (Strings) No. 15 in A minor, Op. 132.** Busch String Quartet 11 sides, 6-12" discs, Nos. V-15102/7, in Set VM-490†, list price complete with album \$11.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

Each of these quartets has been available in three recorded editions, but in each case the new set is badly needed and takes immediate precedence over the previous versions. Op. 74 is particularly welcome in a good modern recording for none of the existing sets (Léner, Capet, Rosé) could be termed even adequate. Consequently the Budapests' superiority is not hard to establish, but this robust reading would triumph over much stiffer competition. H.M.V.'s repertory department turned to the Busch Four for the two "last" quartets: the first (Op. 127) and perhaps the most intimate and moving (Op. 132) of that group. The choice is richly justified. There is some unevenness here, but the Busches strive less for perfectionism than for sensitive and illuminating insight, and they meet nobly the challenge of the profound Adagios that are the very soul of these works — perhaps the quintessence of Beethoven's matured genius.

I don't think there will ever be an ideal, "definitive," version of these or the other last quartets, but one is likely to spend many fruitless years waiting for recorded performances that come closer to the impossible goal.

**Beethoven: Thirty-Three Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli, Op. 120.** Artur Schnabel (piano). 14 sides, 7-12" imported discs in the H.M.V. Beethoven Piano Society Set Vol. 13, price complete with album \$17.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

The work of the Beethoven Piano Society was not completed with the publication of Schnabel's edition of all thirty-two piano sonatas, indeed further volumes may follow No. 13, but surely this is the crowning arch in perhaps the most monumental tonal edifice in the world of recorded music. Apart from a complete *Fidelio*, the Diabelli Variations are the last major work of Beethoven to be recorded; they have been long anticipated and while it is too much to ask that any one musician—even a Schnabel—exhaust the full potentialities of a work of this stature, there are few who could cope with its perplexing problems as well. There are occasional passages where one's attention is diverted by a hardness or twanginess of recorded tone, by a rigidity of phrasing, or a lapse in interpretative sensibility, but considered as a whole this is a notably triumphant achievement.

Not the least merit of the album is the accompanying thirty-two page booklet by Eric Blom that is a model of everything such notes should be: a brief but pregnant essay on *The Variation Form and Beethoven*, the curious *History of Op. 120*, and detailed—and truly penetrating—annotations on the music, liberally illustrated in notation. Paragraph after paragraph calls out for quotation, but I shall content myself with a few lines that seem the best possible introduction to the work itself: "Beethoven added a spiritual quality to his greatest variation sets . . . which is the personal secret of his genius. It may be said that whereas earlier composers—and later ones, too, if it comes to that—transformed their themes more or less ingeniously, he transfigured his . . . What this transfiguration into fantasy and poetry and wit is cannot be told by verbal analysis . . . But to listen to the performance if the Diabelli Variations will be, it is to be hoped, like reading between the lines, and so the lines themselves may, perhaps, be of some little use, if only as a kind of stave into which the hearer must fill notes of his own imagining."

**Böhm: Partita über die Arie "Jesu du bist allzu schöne."** Yella Pessl. (harpsichord). 2 sides, 10" disc, No. V-1938, price \$1.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

Georg Böhm (1661-1733) has a place in the history books largely because of the fact he was organist at the Johanniskirche in Lüneburg at the time Bach was a member of the choir at the Michaelskirche, and because he is supposed



to have been instrumental in drawing Bach's attention to Buxtehude's famous *Abendmusiken*. Yet he was also a composer of considerable note in his day. The present set of fourteen variations is the first example of his work I have ever heard and of course its first representation on discs. Blithe and piquant music, played and recorded here with marked verve, it can't be ranked with the great works of even its own day, but it is a happy example of competent and spirited writing around 1700.

## BRAHMS

**Brahms: Das Mädchen spricht, Op. 107, No. 3 & Ständchen, Op. 106, No. 1; Schumann: O ihr Herren, Op. 37, No. 3 & Röslein, Op. 89, No. 6.** Elisabeth Schumann (soprano, in German) with piano accompaniments by George Reeves. 2 sides, 10" imported disc, No. G-DA1620, list price \$2.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

The two Brahms songs are familiar; those by Schumann are new to records and also, I imagine, to many *Lieder* devotees. Mme Schumann is in top form throughout and excellently recorded. This may not be one of her greatest discs, but it is surely one of the most delightful.

**Brahms: O kühler Wald & O wüsst' ich doch.** See under Collections (Karl Erb Lieder Album).

**Brahms: Sixteen Waltzes, Op. 39 (Arr. Piano Solo) (5 sides) & Ballade ("Edward") in D minor, Op. 10, No. 1.** Anatole Kitain (piano). 3-12" discs, Nos. C-69278/90D, in Set CM-342, list price complete with album \$5.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

We had a piano solo version of these waltzes, (originally for piano four-hands), two years ago from Bachaus (in VM-321). Kitain—winner of the Liszt International Piano Contest in 1933—gives a quite different conception and exposition of the miniature dance poems: his set is more spaciouly laid out and better integrated, the piano tone is brighter, although like Bachaus's a little hard, and the rhythms are cleaner. In both performance and recording the new album takes first honors.

**Britten: Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge, Op. 10.** Boyd Neel String Orchestra. 6 sides, 3-12" imported discs, Nos. D-X226/8, list price complete with album \$7.25. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

Britten is one of Britain's youngest (born 1913) and most promising composers. A student with Frank Bridge and John Ireland, he began to compose early and in many forms; judging by English critics and the present work, he has already attained a remarkable technical mastery. These *Variations* (which run through a *March*, *Romance*, *Aria Italiana*, *Bourrée Classique*, *Wiener Waltz*, *Moto Per-*

*petuo*, *Funeral March*, *Chant*, and *Fugue* seem to be considered his major work to-date. The discs are the first examples of his work to reach this country, but they were preceded in England by a set (also Decca) of *Soirées Musicales* after Rossini, including—on the odd-side—an Irish Reel from Britten's score for the film *Village Harvest*.

The principal shortcoming of the present work is the inclusion of *genre* pieces like the *Aria Italiana* and *Wiener Waltz*, very cleverly turned out, but definitely lessening the effect of the remarkable *Funeral March*, *Chant*, and *Fugue*. There is some remarkably powerful and eloquent writing in these last sections, writing that on first hearing marks Britten as a man to be watched. The whole work is an unusually attractive and interesting example of contemporary music on discs (it is played and recorded with the same vitality and skill that are characteristic of the composer), and its best pages are an indication that not only Britain but the world has a highly significant new force to reckon with.

(The theme itself is not identified in the accompanying notes by Henry Boys, but I have been told it is drawn from the second—*Allegretto poco lento*—of Bridge's *Three Idylls* for String Quartet, once recorded on C-50217/8D, now out-of-print.)

**Bruckner: Symphony No. 9 in D minor.** Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Siegmund von Hausegger. 14 sides, 7-12" imported discs, Nos. G-DB4515/21, list price \$17.50 the set (plain 7-pocket album 50c additional). (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

I must confess to a certain inferiority complex where Bruckner's symphonies are concerned: I am far from insensible of their grandeur of conception or the lofty eloquence of expression, but Bruckner's world is a planet swinging far outside my musical solar system. For me the grandeur too often becomes mere grandiosity, the eloquence an eternal and boring discourse. For me, ecstasy in music is a fragile and a rare thing, a quality that cannot be sustained indefinitely and should not even if could be, if we are to retain any true sense of its preciousness and intensity. The other Bruckner symphonies are problem enough: here in the Ninth (monumental as it is, unfinished according to the composer's intentions) where he sums up his life and works, I am baffled and glutted by the endless turgid waves of sound.

I can only say that the work seems to be excellently played and recorded, and turn it over with relief to the welcoming arms of those fanatical Brucknerites who—in the words of one of their most important spokesmen, Gabriel Engel—feel in this music the "nobility and sweep of the soaring of a great soul on the wing," and who "cannot, while listening, be aware of the banal ticking of endless chronometric seconds, but will be borne along with it in its sublime flight for an infinitesimal cosmic moment into magic, mystic regions where the mere passing of measured minutes is about as noticeable as in the planetary time-table."



**Brumel: Sicut Lillum & French Folk Music: Complainte de Notre-Dame** (Chanson populaire Bourguignonne, col. Maurice Emmanuel). La Manécanterie des Petits Chanteurs à la Croix de Bois (unacc. chorus, in Latin & French). 2 sides, 10" imported disc, No. G-K8108, list price \$1.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.)

Antoine Brumel, previously unrepresented on records, was a Flemish contrapuntist, born around 1480 and died around 1520, a contemporary of Josquin des Prés and pupil of Okeghem. Histories support an ancient contention that his technical mastery was not matched by his inspiration, but as in so many similar cases it is far better to be able to make up our own minds from a direct knowledge of the music. The present Motet can give only an inconclusive answer, of course, but it impresses me as a work of true breadth and solemnity. The popular song on the other side, arranged for solo treble with choral responses, is also a grave air, more poignant but far less deeply moving than the motet. The Manécanterie chorus is a bit shaky, as usual; nevertheless this is one of its best discs.

**Busoni: Two Sonatinas, "Ad Usum Infantis" & "In Diem Nativitatis Christi MCMXVII."** Michael Zadora (piano). 4 sides, 2-12" discs, Nos. FRM-23/4, list price \$3.50 the pair. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

To be reviewed next month.

**Debussy: Nocturnes Nuages, Fêtes, Strènes (7 sides): Debussy: Le Martyre de Saint-Sebastien-Fanfare & Dukas: La Péri-Fanfare (1 side).** Orchestre des Festivals Debussy conducted by Désiré Inghelbrecht. 4-12" discs, Nos. C-P69315/8D, in Set CM-344, list price complete with album \$6.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

To be reviewed next month.

**Delibes: Coppelia—Thème Slav Varié & Czardas (Danse Hongroise); Sylvia—Prélude, Valse Lente, & Pizzicati.** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Efrem Kurtz. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. C-69323D, list price \$1.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

The conductor of the *Ballets Russes* made two records in England, one of *Coppelia* and one of *Sylvia* excerpts, and the present disc couples side one of each. I don't know why we didn't get the other two sides, but anyway this is an attractive cocktail of tangy Delibes tunes, blended with a skillful hand. The orchestral playing here may not set the world on fire, but it certainly puts to shame that of the band under Kurtz's direction in the current New York presentations of the *Ballets Russes*.

**Falla: El Sombrero de Tres Picos—Ballet Suite.** Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 4 sides,

2-10" discs, Nos. V-4406/7, in Set VM-505, list price complete with album \$2.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

An up-to-date version of the pungent *Three-Cornered Hat* dances was inevitable for even the best of the existing versions (Arbós, CM-X38) could not catch the full fire and incisiveness of this superlatively animated music. But I was not prepared to find, even from Mr. Fiedler's invariably vigorous and skillful hands, a set as brilliant and keen-edged as this. It's probably the most ably recorded representation of any of Falla's work; the only disappointment is that it was not expanded to cover the complete ballet, something the phonograph and Mr. Fiedler—owe us to do someday.

**Francaix: Sérénade Comique & Bozza: Scherzo.** Saxophone Quartet of Paris. 2 sides, 10" disc, No. C-388M, list price 75c. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

The virtuoso saxophone ensemble (that can give lessons in musicianship and brilliance to many a famous string quartet) turns its talents here to piquant bits from the pens of two of the most promising younger French composers, Jean Francaix is already known on discs by his Piano Concertino and Concerto (the latter was reviewed last month); Eugène Bozza is a recent *Prix de Rome* winner who is represented on records for the first time. Both pieces are witty, highly animated, abounding in staccato and tricky effects, and both are dazzlingly played and recorded.

**Gluck: Orpheus—Lass mich allein (Recit.) & So klag' ich thren Tod (Aria), Act I; Ach, ich habe sie verloren. Act III.** Margarete Klose (soprano, in German) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 2 sides, 12" imported disc, No. G-DB4531, list price \$2.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

The choice of language offers the only source of criticism here, for Mme Klose sings Orpheus' two great arias with poignant simplicity and enchanting dark tonal opulence, and she is flawlessly accompanied and recorded. The first air is known in French as *Objet de mon Amour* and in Italian *Chiamo il mio ben così*; the second is of course the famous *Che farò senza Euridice*, neither is likely to be heard on or off discs in a more admirable or moving performance than given on this notable disc.

**Gounod: Mireille—Anges du Paradis (Cavatine), Act III & Reyser: Sigurd—Esprits gardiens: Le bruit des Chants, Act II.** Georges Thill (tenor, in French) with orchestra conducted by Eugène Bigot. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. C-9147M, list price \$1.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

Not a very new recording, but one of Thill's best discs and a welcome addition to American catalogues where *Mireille*



is poorly represented and Reyer's *Sigurd* not at all. The latter, by the way, is a French musico-dramatic version of the *Siegfried* legend and offers an interesting comparison with Wagner's *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*.

## HANDEL

**Handel: L'Allegro, Il Penseroso ed Il Moderato**—Let me wander, not unseen. See reverse-side of Bach: Komm, süßer Tod.

**Handel: L'Allegro, Il Penseroso ed Il Moderato**—Sweet Bird; Mozart: Die Entführung aus dem Serail—Welcher Kummer (Recit.) & Traurigkeit ward mir zum Lese (Aria), Act II. Margherita Perras (soprano, in German) with the Berlin State Opera House Orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-12328†, list price \$1.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

The fine Mozart air—the only electrical recording—was reviewed from the imported pressing (G-DB4484) last December. There it was coupled with *Deh vieni, non tardar* from *Le Nozze di Figaro*, a more effective performance but hardly as novel a choice of selection as the florid Handel air with which it is backed here. This is the famous coloratura *Penseroso's* Aria from the first part of the ode based on Milton's poem; despite its concert popularity the only other recording is an oldish version in French by Ritter-Ciampi (B-90043). The present performance is considerably less than virtuoso, but it will have to serve for the present.

**Handel: Concerti Grossi, Op. 6, Vol. 3.** Boyd Neel String Orchestra & Arnold Goldsbrough (harpsichord). 12 sides, 6-12" imported discs, Nos. D-X132/7, list price complete with album \$13.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

No. 7 in B flat major  
No. 9 in F major

No. 8 in G minor  
(4 sides each)

The first six concertos in this ambitious project by Boyd Neel for Decca have been available for a year or more (D-25655/67). The present release is the third and the most interesting installment to-date, for none of the three works it contains has been recorded before. No. 7 comprises five movements: *Largo*, a sprightly fugal *Allegro*, *Largo e piano* (one of Handel's profoundest slow movements), a gentle *Intermezzo-like Andante*, and a piquant *Hornpipe* for finale. No. 8 is in six movements: *Allemande*, *Grave* (noble *Trauermusik*, this), *Andante Allegro* (no contradiction in terms in the old days when *Andante* meant merely "going"), a serene *Adagio*, expressive *Siciliana*, and a vigorously rhythmized *Allegro*. Here the fourth and sixth movements, taking only a half side each, are combined on the second face of D-X135 to avoid a break in the *Siciliana* on the first side. Again in No. 9 there are six movements and a change in the regular order for recording

exigencies: the work opens with the second movement, a sturdy *Allegro*, followed by the third—another expressive *Siciliana*; then come the spacious opening *Largo*, followed in regulation order by one of Handel's breeziest fugal *Allegros*, a pert *Menuet*, and the even saucier final *Gigue*.

Those who know the previous records in this series are familiar with the qualities of the young Boyd Neel orchestra. Here again one finds an occasional laxness of grip or slackness of pace, but also the fresh spontaneity and sweep so essential to the spirit of these glorious "improvisations." These are truly "Grand" Concertos and they are given stirring recorded exposition.

**Haydn: Symphony No. 100 in G major ("Military" Symphony, Old B. & H. No. 11).** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 6 sides, 3-12" discs, Nos. V-12274/6, in Set VM-472†, list price complete with album \$5.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

The only previous electrical recording of the "Military" symphony is that conducted by Knappertsbusch on four ten-inch discs (D-20038/41, formerly CM-189), a fair routine performance, but none too well recorded even by 1933 standards. Bruno Walter gets much better recording, of course, and his performance has considerable bright vivacity, but this set hardly does full justice to the eloquence and audacity of the fine music. The symphony really is mis-named, for the term "Military" stems from the use of a percussion choir (so-called "Turkish music") in the second movement rather than from a martial character of the work itself. But it is glorious music, full of irresistible vitality and humor and masculine tenderness—qualities which unfortunately are implicit rather than explicit in this breezy but rather superficial and careless reading.

**Holst: St. Paul's Suite.** Jacques String Orchestra conducted by Reginald Jacques. 4 sides, 2-10" discs, Nos. C-17113/4D, list price \$2.00 the pair. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

I'm glad to find another string orchestra entering the recording lists, particularly with such an old favorite as Holst's gay and folkish suite written originally for a girl's school orchestra. Unfortunately, however, we already have a good version of the work (Boyd Neel Orchestra, D-20171/2) and the Jacques performance, although it is given somewhat better recording is neither as deft nor as vivacious.

**Liszt: Venezia e Napoli (Après une lecture de Dante) —Gondoliera & Tarantelle.** Louis Kentner (piano). 4 sides, 2-12" discs, Nos. C-69313/4D, in Set CM-X105, list price complete with album \$3.25. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

The seventh number in the Second Year of *Années de pèlerinage* comprises three pieces, the two played here and



a short middle movement, *Canzone*, that has never been recorded. The *Gondoliera* has been done before by Grunzeis (D-20357) and Kilenyi (C-DX799), but Kentner's is the only available extensive version of the long *Tarantelle*. His treatment is that of a very cynical and able virtuoso, as perhaps the theatrical nature of the music demands, but I think it is possible to get more out of it than the shallow brilliance Kentner gives us here. The recording is fair, but no love is lost between it and the pianist's hard tone.

**Loewe: Dem fremden Kindes heil'ger Christ.** See under Collections (Karl Erb Lieder Album).

**Matthay, Elvès, Op. 17 & Album Leaf (from Stray Fancies, Op. 22).** Myra Hess (piano). 2 sides, 10" imported disc, No. G-B8758, list price \$1.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

Tobias Matthay is one of the outstanding piano pedagogues and Miss Hess, as one of his many famous pupils and President of the British school that bears his name, pays him a pretty little tribute by recording her deft performances of these two pieces. Their content is slight enough musically, but it is dexterously expressed in a purely pianistic idiom.

## MOZART

**Mozart: Concerto (Piano and Orchestra) No. 21 in C major, K. 467.** Artur Schnabel & London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent. 8 sides, 4-12" discs, Nos. V-15084/7, in Set VM-486†, list price complete with album \$8.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

**Mozart: Concerto (Piano and Orchestra) No. 26 in D minor, K. 537 ("Coronation" Concerto) (7 sides) & Fantasia in D minor, K. 397 (piano solo, 1 side).** Wanda Landowska & Chamber Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 4-12" discs, Nos. V-15064/7, in Set VM-483†, list price complete with album \$8.00. Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

Schnabel's No. 21 is a first recording and Landowska's "Coronation" Concerto is the long anticipated replacement of the antiquated Tagliaferro version (D-25634/7). Schnabel's Mozart has not impressed me too favorably in the past and in the present work I do not find all the genial warmth and glow that this buoyant music demands; yet its wholesomeness and health are well caught in a lucid and even persuasive reading, recorded as it is played with spacious clarity. With the reservation that much more could have been done, this set can be welcomed for its many sound merits, and the music itself is so engaging that few will want to higgler over executant perfectionism. A singing slow movement like the Andante here is guaranteed to seduce the sternest purist...

After coming face to face with Mozart the sanest, wisest and most enchanting of Good Companions, it is a bit of a shock to meet Mozart the Social Lion. The "Coronation" Concerto was played at, but not especially composed for,

the coronation of Leopold II in 1790. Whatever Mozart had in mind when he wrote, it was certainly not self-revelation. When he stooped to putting on a good show, he put on a good one indeed, but there is little here under the decorative surface. Its glittering tapestry is unrolled with relish and skill by Landowska, and if her playing seems on the cold side, perhaps it is largely because inner warmth is lacking in the music itself. Not until the last side with its solo D minor Fantasia do we hear again the authentic voice of the Mozart we respect and love best.

**Mozart: Concerto (Violin and Orchestra) No. 3 in G major, K. 216.** Yehudi Menuhin & Paris Symphony Orchestra conducted by Georges Enesco. 6 sides, 3-12" discs, Nos. V-15078/80, in Set VM-485†, list price complete with album \$6.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

Of the first five violin concertos, written in 1775 when Mozart was nineteen, Nos. 1 and 2 are unrecorded, No. 5—the "Turkish" concerto—is well-known; 3 and 4 are less familiar, although the latter has been excellently recorded by Szigeti (CM-224) and No. 3 by Huberman (CM-258) as well as by Menuhin here. Huberman's version is good, perhaps a little more polished in execution of the solo part than Menuhin's, but a bit mannered in comparison with Menuhin's simplicity and spontaneity, and more coarsely accompanied and recorded. One will not find here the philosophy and grave beauty of the C major Piano Concerto above, nor the cynical entertainment of the "Coronation" work, but this is far more than merely youthful and naive music. There is imaginative experimentation as well and the divine grace and luminosity with which few mortals have ever been gifted.

**Mozart: Mass in F major, K. 102.** Motet Singers & String Orchestra conducted by Paul Boepple. 6 sides, 3-12" discs, Nos. MC-5001/3, in Set MC-23, list price complete with album \$6.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

Mozart's nineteen or twenty Masses have been given inadequate gramophonic attention; indeed, except for the great Requiem, they are too seldom heard in "actual" performances. Apart from a few scattered excerpts the only notable recordings are Christschall's complete "Coronation" Mass and Requiem, and an abridged H.M.V. set of the latter work, none of which was too satisfactory even at the time of issue, and all of which are now out-of-print. The badly needed modern complete Requiem was obviously beyond Musicraft's capabilities (when will one of the major companies wake up to the fact that a good Requiem set would win it both artistic acclaim and sure financial reward?), but the pioneering phono-musical youngsters have again put their elders to shame. This is their most ambitious project so far; it is also probably the most significant and successful, conquering the old problem of choral-orchestral recording as brilliantly as the Weinrich albums blazed a new trail in organ recording. And not the least cause for rejoicing in this set is its introduction to



recording studios of one of the finest choral ensembles and choral conductor in this country. The Motet Singers and Paul Boepple have established a notable reputation in the last few years, have brought a new standard of sincerity and skill to a repertory in which too many charlatans and incompetents have run wild; this album, admirable as it is, is a harbinger of more fine things to come. The signs point at long last to a series of recordings that will atone for the gramophone's inadequate—and too often scurvy—treatment in the past of the choral repertory.

As for the music set forth so dexterously and genially here, there is little for the reviewer to say except that it is one of the most delightful of all the early Mozart works. There are none of the profundities and breadths of a B minor Mass or *Missa Solemnis*, but there is instead a youthful fervor and buoyant ecstasy that are no less moving. This is a Mass of Youth and of Springtime rather than a formalized churchly ceremony: the innocent joyous dance of the Jongleur before the Divine Image. Musicraft, Mr. Boepple, and their talented collaborators leave us deeply in their debt for a rare and precious musical experience.

**Mozart: Die Entführung aus dem Serail—Welcher Kummer & Traurigkeit ward mir zum Lose.** See reverse-side of Handel: *L'Allegro—Sweet Bird*.

**Mozart: Die Zauberflöte—Overture.** B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-15190, list price \$2.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.)

While we are impatiently waiting for Victor to re-press (or even to permit us to import) the complete *Magic Flute* set made in Europe under Beecham's direction, we have to be content with the twelfth electrical recording of the overture only. Of course this doesn't just round out an even dozen of versions: Toscanini's name alone is assurance of that. And none of the existing discs is of recent vintage or of exceptional interpretative merit, giving the present version unquestioned superiority. I'm only sorry that it wasn't a little less strenuously and dramatically played. This is high-powered electrical recording and an electrifying Toscanini with a vengeance.

**Mozart: Symphony No. 33 in B flat major, K. 319 (5 sides) & Bach: Suite No. 3 in D major—Atr.** Edwin Fischer's Chamber Orchestra. 3-12" discs, Nos. V-15043/5, in Set VM-479†, list price complete with album \$6.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

The labels and booklet would have us believe this is Symphony No. 32, but no standard list I know gives any justification of that numbering. No. 32 is properly the G major work (sometimes known as an Overture in the Italian Style), K. 318, recently recorded in Germany by Hans von Benda and the Berlin Philharmonic (T-E2317). But more important than the correct number is the fact

that the present work is new to records and very likely also to the ears of even avid Mozartians. It is not one of the pregnant early works (like the G minor Symphony, K.183, in CM-323), but it is a particularly happy example of the products of his early twenties, written during his stay in Salzburg in 1779. Fischer has an admirably apt hand and understanding mind for such music: he neither minimizes nor exaggerates the slightness of its material and comparative orthodoxy of treatment. He is content to let the music speak naturally, freely, and with conviction for itself. And this vivacious, glowing performance and clean open recording enable it to speak very persuasively indeed. But when it ends, on side 5, why was it necessary to "oblige" with an encore in the form of the familiar Bach air?

**Mozart: 10 Variations on a Theme by Gluck ("Unser dummer Pöbel meint"), K. 455 (3 sides) & Rondo in D major, K. 485 (1 side).** Lili Krauss (piano). 2-12" imported discs, Nos. P-R20397/8, list price \$4.00 the pair. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

The first recording of these variations (Kathleen Long, MC-1051/2) was reviewed in the January 1938 *Record Supplement*. I didn't think we'd get another version so soon, still less that Miss Long's fine performance would be surpassed. I liked it, but the magic of Lili Krauss is all-powerful. Those who have not yet heard her playing are probably bored with my unvarying ecstatic acclaim of its fluidity, warmth, and fine-grained musicianship. I wish, too, I could say something new, but what can one do when faced with such superb works as we have had from her? Repetitive or not, I can only say again that a set such as this is my idea of the apotheosis of piano playing and recording.

**Offenbach: Selection of Can-Cans & Johann and Josef Strauss: Selection of Polkas.** Light Symphony Orchestra, conductor unnamed. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-36213, list price \$1.25. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

Reviewed from the imported pressing (G-C2963) in the August 1938 *Record Supplement*: Both Offenbach and the Strausses make our present day stage composers seem sadly lacking in exuberance and skill. The orchestra lays to with a will in these toe-tickling rhythms and is guaranteed to bring down the house with every performance.

**Offenbach: Le Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein—Galop & J. Strauss: Tritsch-Trasch Polka, Op. 214.** Orchestre Raymonde conducted by G. Walter. 2 sides, 10" disc, No. C-386M, list price 75c. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

Another bright exposition of the light musical gospel according to Offenbach and Strauss, far more invigorating and infectious than most discs of its type.



**Puccini:** *La Fanciulla del West—Ch'ella mi credo libero, Act III & Tosca—E lucevan le stelle, Act III.* Jussi Björling (tenor, in Italian) with orchestra conducted by Nils Grevillius. 2 sides, 10" disc, No. V-4408, list price \$1.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

A companion disc to V-4372 of last November whereon the sensational Swedist tenor sang Cavaradossi's other big aria, *Recondita armonia*. Björling impresses more by his natural gifts—a truly heroic voice and its easy, open delivery—than by any notable interpretative insight or depth. These emotional outbursts are routine and traditional enough in style, but one rarely hears them backed up by such vocal opulence and strength as are caught on this disc.

**Rameau:** *La Joyeuse, Menuets majeur et mineur, La Poule, Les Sauvages, Les Tricotets.* Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-15179†, list price \$2.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

Easily the best of the still too few Rameau harpsichord records. The cheerfully cackling *Hen* is familiar, but none of the other pieces in this miniature recital has been otherwise recorded. Mme Landowska is in top form with these varied little pieces and though the recording dates back a couple of years, it still sounds first-rate.

**Ravel:** *Le Tombeau de Couperin.* Paris Conservatory discs, Nos. V-12320/1, list price \$3.00 the pair. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

#### Prelude, Rigaudon, Menuet, Forlane

The only recording of the orchestral version of *Le Tombeau de Couperin* has been that by Coppola and the Paris Conservatory Orchestra issued by Victor (V-11150/1) on a special list in December 1931. I started to compare the new version—issued on last month's special list—with the old, thinking that here was an apt opportunity for demonstrating the recording progress that has been made in the last seven years. The new discs sounded pretty good . . . but the old ones sounded just as good; in fact they sounded exactly the same, and sure enough they were the same as the matrix numbers clearly established. What's going on here? Is Victor trying to kid us? Or has it made an honest mistake? This is a nice little set, piquant music and a skillful performance, but it certainly isn't the hot-off-the-griddle "high fidelity" recording the trusting purchaser is likely to take it for.

Ravel fares badly this month for beside the shady treatment he gets above, the *Don Quichotte* Songs, announced as V-4404/5, seem to have had misadventures of another sort: only the second record has come through, the other is held up until another European master can be obtained.

**Reyer:** *Stigurd—Esprits gardiens.* See reverse-side of **Gounod:** *Mitraille—Anges du Paradis.*

## RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

**Rimsky-Korsakov:** *Le Coq d'Or — Symphonic Suite.* London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. 6 sides, 3-12" discs, Nos. V-12347/9, in Set VM-504, list price complete with album \$5.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

After the Ravel *Tombeau* episode I was almost prepared for this set to be a re-issue of the acoustic Albert Coates recording, but happily it is truly the long awaited modern replacement of that notable old set. And it's really modern in every respect: a performance that matches the kaleidoscopic color and impact of Rimsky's score, and recording that captures that color and impact with brilliant force. The Suite (according to the unusually informative leaflet accompanying the album) was arranged in accordance with the composer's intentions by Glazounov and Steinberg and comprises four movements: 1. *Introduction, Prologue, Slumber Scene and Warning of the Cockerel*; 2. *Prelude to Act II, Arrival of King Dodon at the Scene of Battle*; 3. *Dance of King Dodon and the Queen of Schemacha*; 4. *Prelude to Act III, Bridal March, Death of King Dodon*. Everyone who knows *Le Coq d'Or* in either the opera or ballet versions (for that matter, everyone who has listened enthralled to the tonal tales of *Scheherazade*) will want and be sure to delight in these discs.

**Rosenmüller:** *Church Sonata in E minor.* Edmée Ortmans-Bach & Dominique Blot (violins), Marcelle de Lacour (harpsichord), Noëlie Pierront (organ) with the Instrumental Ensemble "Ars Rediviva" conducted by Claude Crussard. 2 sides, 12" imported disc, No. G-DB5064, list price \$2.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

Johann Rosenmüller (c.1619-1684) was a Saxon composer who spent many years in Venice. Famous in his own day for his vocal works (Bach liked his *Welt ade* so well he incorporated it in one of his own cantatas), he seems best remembered today by his remarkable instrumental works, particularly two sets of "sonatas" for two to five instruments. The present work comes from the second set (published 1682), called "church" sonatas because they contained no dance movements and were written in serious, elevated style rather than because they were considered religious music. We had a version of the E minor work years ago from Kantorei (K-9, played by a string trio and organ); in the present version, with the figured bass "realized" by Crussard, the opening Largo seems somewhat amplified. I have no score to check with, but this performance and recording are certainly vastly superior, and the noble eloquence of the work is superbly captured. A fine work and another of those for whose release (despite the fact that it appears under an H.M.V. label) we are indebted to La Boite à Musique.



**Roussel: Quartet (Strings) in D major, Op. 45.** Roth String Quartet. 6 sides, 3-12" discs, Nos. C-69231/3D, in Set CM-339, list price complete with album \$5.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

This quartet is not only a first recording, but the only chamber work by the late Albert Roussel to reach discs, appropriately played by the Roths for whom it was understood to have been written (1931/2) and who were the first to perform it in public. Like much of Roussel's writing this is uncommonly fine—spun and restrained music that demands familiarity to reveal its full stature. But even on first hearing it one realizes the delicate strength and distinction of the work, and the craftsmanship of the Roth's recorded performance.

## SCHUBERT

**Schubert: Quartet (Strings) No. 14 in D minor ("Der Tod und das Mädchen").** Busch String Quartet. 8 sides, 4-12" discs, Nos. V-15005/8, in Set VM-468†. list price complete with album \$8.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

**Schubert: Quintet (Piano and Strings) in A major, Op. 114 ("Forellen" Quintet (9 sides)).** Elly Ney & Strub String Quartet. Trio in E flat major, Op. 100—Scherzo (1 side). Elly Ney Trio. 5-12" imported discs, Nos. G-DB4533/7, list price \$12.50 the set (plain 5-pocket album 50c additional). (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of U. S. A.).

The Busch "Death and the Maiden" is the seventh electrical recording; the Ney-Strub set is the eighth version of the "Trout" Quintet. Most collectors already own sets of both works, the quartet probably as played by the Roth (CM-269) or Budapest (VM-34) fours; the quintet probably as played by Schnabel and the Pro Arte Quartet (VM-312). The announcement that the new Busch set supersedes all its rivals and must be had at all costs will bring them small joy, but once they have heard these discs, tasted the incomparable richness of Schubert's sweetness and strength as captured so flawlessly here, they can have no regrets. In its sure delicacy of nuance and phrasing, its transparent and luminous tonal beauty, this set comes as close to complete perfection as anything I know in the entire gramophonic chamber repertory. With the quintet, however, the new set is by no means as outstanding. It is an excellent performance, surely one of the best recorded versions, but hardly superior to the admirable Schnabel-Pro Arte album.

**Schubert: Rosamunde—Incidental Music, Excerpts.** Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty. 8 sides, 4-12" discs, Nos. C-69309/12D, in Set CM-343, list price complete with album \$6.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

**Overture ("Zauberharfe") (C-69309D)**

**Entr'acte No. 1, B minor (C-69310D)**

**Ballet Music No. 1 in B minor and G major; Ballet Music No. 2 in G major (C-69311D)**

**Entr'acte No. 2 in D major; Hirtenmelodie; Entr'acte No. 3 in B flat major (C-69312D)**

Despite the popularity of Schubert's music for Von Chezy's *Rosamunde*, great confusion has existed in the identification and proper order of the various pieces. I prepared a list for the *Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music* on the basis of a published Thematic Index to Schubert's works, only to find later that it did not jibe with the full score of the work itself. The task of straightening out the confusion for the Shop's card files was amply rewarded when Columbia decided to bring out American pressings of the Harty set of excerpts and give a clear presentation of the corrected material on the record labels and in the accompanying leaflet. The recording itself goes back quite a few years, but as this is the only extensive disc representation of *Rosamunde* and as several of the pieces are otherwise un-recorded, there is obvious need for it in the American catalogue. Dropping the *Alfonso und Estrella* Overture played at the first performance of *Rosamunde* and part of this set when originally issued (now available on C-68322D) in favor of the *Zauberharfe* work now universally known as the "Rosamunde Overture" was also an excellent idea, and the set as it stands includes all the instrumental pieces Schubert wrote for *Rosamunde*.

**Schubert: Am See, An die Laute, Dass sie hier gewesen, Die Liebe hat gelogen, & Der Wanderer an den Mond.** See under Collections (Karl Erb Lieder Album).

**Schubert: Ihr Grab; Schumann: Wer machte dich so krank, Op. 35, No. 11 & Alte Laute, Op. 35, No. 12.** Karl Erb (tenor, in German) with piano accompaniments by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 2 sides, 12" imported disc, No. G-DB4467, list price \$2.50 (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

One of Erb's finest records. The choice of songs (all except *Alte Laute* hitherto unrecorded) makes for rather a surfeit of melancholy, but both singing and recording are highly admirable.

**Schumann: Was soll ich sagen.** See under Collections (Karl Erb Lieder Album).

**Schumann: Die Lotosblume, Op. 25, No. 7 & Widmung ("Du meine Seele"), Op. 25, No. 1.** Herbert Janssen (baritone, in German) with piano accompaniments by Gerald Moore. 2 sides, 10" disc, No. V-1931†, price \$1.50.

Reviewed from the imported pressing (G-DA1569) last November: the impetuous passion and gloriously fresh voice that Janssen brings to *Widmung* well warrant the British eulogies of this recorded performance as the apotheosis of Lieder singing.



## SIBELIUS

**Sibelius:** *Symphony No. 5 in E flat major, Op. 82* (7 sides) & *Pohjola's Daughter—Tone Poem, Op. 49* (3 sides). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 5-12" discs, No. V-15019/23, in Set VM-474, list price complete with album \$10.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

I'm afraid too many are likely to think as I did before hearing these records, "Another Fifth!... what's the matter with the one we have?" (by Kajanus in the first volume of the Sibelius Society, VM-333). Well, a hearing of the new set demonstrates conclusively not only what's the matter with the Kajanus set, but how totally inadequate an idea it gave of the music itself. A friend of mine, who doesn't care particularly for Sibelius, was inspired by one playing to term this the finest symphonic album set the gramophone has ever given us. And that isn't as extravagant praise as it sounds. Take one of Koussevitzky's finest readings, the Boston Symphony at the peak of its powers, and recording even more impressive than that of the Prokofieff *Lieutenant Kije* Suite, and the result is to say the least astonishing. One gets a tone poem thrown in for extra good measure, but that can be ignored. The symphony alone is enough to mark the peak of recording achievement A. D. 1938.

**Smetana:** *The Bartered Bride—Faithful Love, Act I, & My dearest love, Act III.* Margarete Teschemacher & Marcel Wittrisch (soprano & tenor, in German) with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 2 sides, 12" imported disc, No. G-DB-4538, list price \$2.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

German versions (*Mit der Mutter & So find' ich dich—Mein lieber Schatz*) of the popular Marenka-Jenik duets. The former is cut, but both are done with the introductory recitatives. While recorded better, they are not as sensitively sung as the French versions by Féraldy and Claudel (CD15120, C-50231D withdrawn), and I wouldn't substitute either of these isolated discs for sides 5 and 27 in the complete set (VM-193), in the original Czech. That's an album, by the way, that has never yet received the distribution and appreciation its lively merits deserve.

**Johann & Josef Strauss:** *Polka Selection.* See reverse-side of Offenbach: Can Cans.

**Johann Strauss:** *Tritsch-Tratsch Polka, Op. 214.* See reverse-side of Offenbach: Grande Duchesse—Galop.

**R. Strauss:** *Der Nacht, Op. 10, No. 3 & Traum durch die Dämmerung, Op. 29, No. 1.* Herbert Janssen (baritone, in German) with piano accompaniments by Gerald Moore. 2 sides, 10" disc, No. V-1930†, list price \$1.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

Janssen is a fine artist; he sings and is recorded well here,

but I cannot recommend this disc as unreservedly as his Schumann record reviewed above. There is little or none of the spontaneity and passion that marked his performance there: instead a restraint and sense of careful effort that are likely to leave most listeners quite unstirred.

**Stravinsky:** *L'Oiseau de Feu—Berceuse* (arr. Dushkin) & Tchaikovsky: *Scherzo, Op. 42, No. 2* (ed. Zimbalist). Nathan Milstein (violin) & Leopold Mittmann (piano). 2 sides, 10" disc, No. C-17115D, list price \$1.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

The *Fire Bird Berceuse* is ineffective divorced from its glowing orchestral colors, and anyway we already have a recording of the violin by Dushkin and Stravinsky themselves (C-17049D). Milstein chooses better when he plays the hitherto unrecorded *Scherzo*, the second of the *Souvenir d'un lieu cher* set (of which the third, *Melodie* in E flat is the best-known). It's an amusing and vivacious trifle, deftly presented here.

**Vivaldi:** *Concerto (Violin) in A minor.* Dominique Blot (violin), Marcelle de Lacour (harpichord), Noellie Pieront (organ) and the Instrumental Ensemble "Ars Rediviva" conducted by Claude Crussard. 2 sides, 12" imported disc, No. G-DB5065, list price \$2.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

This is not one of the familiar Vivaldi concertos, but a work taken from a manuscript collection of works by Vivaldi, Veracini, Alberti, Salviini, and Torelli, and attributed to the greatest of the group by M. Pincherle and other authorities. The enterprising "Ars Rediviva" group presented this work, in the Crussard "realization" used here, in a Paris concert and through the efforts of La Boite à Musique French H.M.V. was persuaded to issue a recording. Whether it is actually a Vivaldi composition or not is less important than the fact that it is music of exceptional vitality and grace, fully worthy of the actual signature of "Il prete rosso," and—in this spirited gramophonic reading—of an honored place in every disc library of eighteenth century masterpieces.

**Wagner:** *Stegfried Idyll.* Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 4 sides, 2-12" imported discs, Nos. G-DB2634/5, price \$5.00 the pair.

Re-stocking one of the popular favorites among the many recorded versions of the *Idyll*, first available about a year ago and in constant demand by collectors ever since.

**Wagner:** *Lohengrin—In fernem Land, Act III & Die Meistersinger—Preislied, Act III.* Charles Kullman (tenor, in German) with orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. C-9146M, list price \$1.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

Kullman received enthusiastic praise when this record was issued a month or so ago in England, and indeed he sings better here than I have ever heard him before, but too often



his naturally attractive voice is forced unduly, becomes strained and unsteady. These don't seem to me better than fair versions of the familiar arias, marked by their spirit more than by their vocal or interpretative skill.

**Wagner: Die Meistersinger—Am stillen Herd, Act I & Die Walküre—Ein Schwert verhiess mir den Vater, Act I.** Max Lorenz (tenor, in German) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 2 sides, 12" imported disc, No. G-DB4547, list price \$2.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

Re-recordings of earlier Lorenz versions on V-11162 (*Am stillen Herd*) and G-EG860, and the orchestra and recording steal the honors. Lorenz is far too strenuous in the *Meistersinger* air, but Siegfried's monologue is impressive, mightily so if one is not too insistent on perfection of vocal quality.

**Weber: Aufforderung zum Tanz, Op. 65.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-15189, list price \$2.00. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

A re-juvenated best-seller, superseding the Stokowski version of 1927 (V-6643), and sure to be even more widely used in music "appreciation" and phonographic propaganda work. (*The Invitation to the Dance*, not *Waltz* as Victor still insists on labelling it, is the music used for the ballet *Spectre de la Rose*. The orchestrator is not specified on the label, but I assume the familiar Berlioz scoring is employed, possibly with some Stokowskian elaborations.)

**Wolf: Andenken & Frohe Botschaft.** See under Collections (Karl Erb Lieder Album).

## COLLECTION

**Karl Erb Lieder Album** (Songs by Brahms, Loewe, Schubert, Schumann, Wolf). Karl Erb (tenor, in German) with piano accompaniments by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 12 sides, 6-10" discs, Nos. V-4398/4403, in Set VM-501†, list price complete with album \$6.50. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

**Schubert: Am See & An die Laute, Op. 81, No. 2** (V-4398). **Dass sie hier gewesen, Op. 59, No. 2 & Der Wanderer an den Mond, Op. 80, No. 1** (V-4399). **Die Liebe hat gelogen, Op. 23, No. 1 & Wolf: Zum neuen Jahr** (V-4400)

**Wolf: Andenken & Frohe Botschaft** (V-4401)

**Loewe: Des fremden Kindes heil'ger Christ, Op. 33, No. 3 & Schumann: Was soll ich sagen, Op. 27, No. 3** (V-4402)

**Brahms: O kühler Wald, Op. 72, No. 3 & O wüsst' ich doch, Op. 63, No. 8** (V-4403)

Several imported recordings by Erb have been reviewed in these pages during the past year; his *Lieder* series has won

the attention and admiration of many connoisseurs and now — despite the fact that his name is unfamiliar to most Americans — Victor re-presses a notable anthology of six of his best ten-inch discs. Seven of the twelve songs are first recordings and this fact alone would give the set distinction, but the performances themselves are exceptionally illuminating. Erb was born in 1877 and naturally his voice is not highly attractive in itself, but it retains astonishing flexibility and his interpretations are marked by their imagination and sensitive artistry. Not a set for the general musical public, but one that is of keen interest and value to *Lieder* specialists and students.

## FOLK MUSIC

**American Folk Songs—Religious and Worldly** (arr. Gatwood & Jackson). Old Harp Singers of Nashville, Tennessee (unacc. vocal ensemble). 4 sides, 2-10" discs, Nos. MC-221/2, list price \$2.00 the pair. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

**Poor Wayfaring Stranger & The Old Ship of Zion** (MC-221)

**Frog Went A-Courting, Sourwood Mountain, The Barnyard Song, On Springfield Mountain** (MC-222)

This group of eight young singers is directed by E. J. Gatwood and was founded by Dr. George Pullen Jackson, author of *White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands* and *Spiritual Folk-Songs of Early America*. It takes its name from the "country singing" groups in the remote parts of their own Upland South, who still sing from a century-old manual called *The Sacred Harp*, and is devoted to perpetuating one of the richest and most neglected repertoires of American folk lore. Here it sings — with perfect simplicity and skill, and an infectious rhythmic bounce — a moving religious ballad, a stirring revival song, and a fascinating group of gay old airs, aptly described in the upland vernacular as "fitter-minded song ballets." Again Musicraft makes a precious contribution to both the general recorded repertory and the still far too scant fund of recorded Americana. An utterly unique album that boasts significant documentary value and — still better — offers a rarely delightful musical experience.

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